

EBOOK

# Enhancing communication across the housing sector

With

**8x8**



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## Contents

Introduction	3
Introducing 8x8	4
Challenges to Overcome	5
The solution	7
8x8's services	8
Customer experience analytics and reporting	8
Omnichannel routing	8
Video collaboration and Remote Fix™	9
SMS APIs	9
PCI/DSS for payments	10
Workforce engagement management	10
Guidance for housing associations	11
The future of housing association communications	12
Who we work with	13
Who are Wavenet	14

# Introduction

Nearly half of all customers (46%) expect companies to respond in under 4 hours.

12% expect a response within 15 minutes or less.

When it comes to housing associations, these expectations are no different. When tenants need to ask questions, log maintenance requests or report emergency issues, time is of the essence, and effective communication is vital.

With innovative contact centre solutions, housing associations can improve communication, cater to diverse tenant needs, streamline operations and ensure regulatory compliance – boosting trust and enhancing the overall tenant and agent experience.

## Seamless, smart and secure

With customer-centric solutions, housing associations can offer game-changing tenant service via a platform they can trust.

Using the following services, they can optimise their ways of working:



**Customer experience analytics and reporting**



**Omnichannel routing**



**Video collaboration and Remote Fix™**



**SMS APIs**



**PCI/DSS for payments**



**Workforce engagement management**

In this eBook, we look at how housing associations can optimise their contact centre operations – and how 8x8's reliable, hyper-secure communications solutions are helping them stay ready, responsive and resilient.

# Introducing 8x8

We work in partnership with 8x8, a leading provider of voice over IP (VOIP) products that specialises in end-to-end contact centres and communications solutions across the public sector and a range of other industries.

By integrating voice, video, chat, contact centres and enterprise-class API solutions into a single platform, 8x8's patented technology helps companies connect and grow.

## Across the housing sector, 8x8's services enable

- Seamless connectivity across every workflow by supercharging apps such as Microsoft Teams and Salesforce
- Smart decision-making via integrated analytics
- Unrivalled uptime
- Anytime availability with 35+ data centres
- Enhanced cyber security with end-to-end encryption



# Challenges to Overcome

## High volume of tenant enquiries

When maintenance requests are pouring in thick and fast, it's no surprise that housing associations are often overwhelmed by the sheer volume – leading to staff burnout, long wait times, and decreased tenant satisfaction. A surge in communication demands can strain resources and cause delays, ultimately impacting overall efficiency and effectiveness.

The answer? Integrated contact centre solutions. Through a unified voice, video, and chat platform, housing associations can manage large numbers of requests efficiently. Features such as automated call routing, AI-powered virtual assistants, and multi-channel support enable them to handle a large number of interactions seamlessly, ensuring prompt and personalised assistance for tenants.

## Improving inclusivity and accessibility

Diverse tenant needs and preferences can cause overwhelm for overstretched housing associations. Yet traditional communication methods don't always work for tenants with disabilities or language barriers, leading to difficulty accessing essential services and information. This can leave them feeling overlooked or excluded from the housing community.

However, with features such as real-time language translation, closed captioning, and screen reader compatibility, housing associations can enhance accessibility and inclusivity in communication. What's more, with customisable communication channels and flexible service options, tenants can benefit from tailored experiences designed to meet their unique needs.

## Difficulty in tracking communication

Without a centralised system for managing communication across various channels and touchpoints, housing associations may struggle to keep track of tenant interactions – resulting in missed requests, delayed responses and inconsistent follow-up.

However, integrated contact centre, voice, video, chat, and API solutions can resolve the issue. By implementing robust tracking and reporting capabilities, housing associations can monitor and analyse communication data in real time, gaining oversight into every interaction and seamlessly coordinating staff members to enhance efficiency, improve accountability and deliver superior tenant service.

## Compliance requirements

Failure to adhere to regulations can result in financial penalties, legal consequences and reputational damage for housing associations. And, with evolving regulations governing data privacy, security, and accessibility, ensuring compliance across communication channels is growing more complex by the day.





With secure and compliant communication platforms, housing associations can mitigate risk and safeguard sensitive tenant information. Using encryption, access controls and audit trails across their call recordings and archives, they can ensure data protection and integrity, while also monitoring and managing compliance in real time.

## Awaab's Law

Awaab's Law requires the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to set out new legal duties for landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould in social homes within a fixed time period. However, without streamlined communication channels and processes that are fit for purpose, housing associations struggle to meet these expectations, leading to poor satisfaction levels and potential legal implications.

Integrated contact centre solutions enable housing associations to enhance their communication. With features such as automated call routing, AI-powered virtual assistants, and real-time analytics, housing associations are empowered to deliver prompt, personalised service to tenants – improving relationships and ensuring compliance.

## Tenant satisfaction measures

As of April 2023, social housing providers in England must now collect data on a new set of tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs). These are part of a new system developed by the Regulator of Social Housing to assess how well social housing landlords are doing at providing good quality homes and services.

The measures are aimed at helping improve standards for people living in social housing, by:

- Providing visibility, letting tenants see how well their landlord is doing.
- Enabling tenants to hold their landlords to account, giving the Regulator insight into which landlords might need to improve things for their tenants.

## Digital inclusion

Not all tenants are equipped with the devices, internet connectivity or digital literacy skills they need to access housing platforms and services, which often stands in the way of getting essential information and support.

By offering user-friendly communication tools via multiple channels, including voice, video, chat, and mobile applications, housing associations can extend digital inclusion to all tenants, creating a more inclusive housing community for all.

# The solution

## Future-fit contact centre solutions

8x8's contact centre solutions help housing associations get the most out of their communications. By consolidating all channels into a single platform, 8x8 provides a unified solution that offers enhanced safety, greater agility and improved services for tenants and agents alike. Whatever your requirements, we can provide tailored support that aligns with your individual goals and budget, ensuring a seamless and resilient experience across every aspect of your communications.

## Solutions to drive communication forwards

- 

**Omnichannel communication capabilities, including voice, email, chat and SMS**
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**Personalised communication and timely responses**
- 

**Improved operational efficiency and productivity with minimal call wait times**
- 

**Streamlined maintenance requests and issue resolution through automated ticketing and prioritisation**
- 

**Intelligent routing to direct enquiries and requests to the right department**
- 

**Integration with existing CRM and property management systems for seamless data exchange**
- 

**Analytics and reporting tools to track communication metrics and measure performance**
- 

**Secure communication protocols that ensure compliance with regulations such as GDPR and HIPAA**
- 

**Video calling and collaboration for enhanced triage and first-time resolutions**

## 8x8's services

### Customer experience analytics and reporting

8x8 Customer Experience Analytics helps housing associations fully understand every step of the tenant journey, enabling them to deliver great experiences.

#### Features and benefits

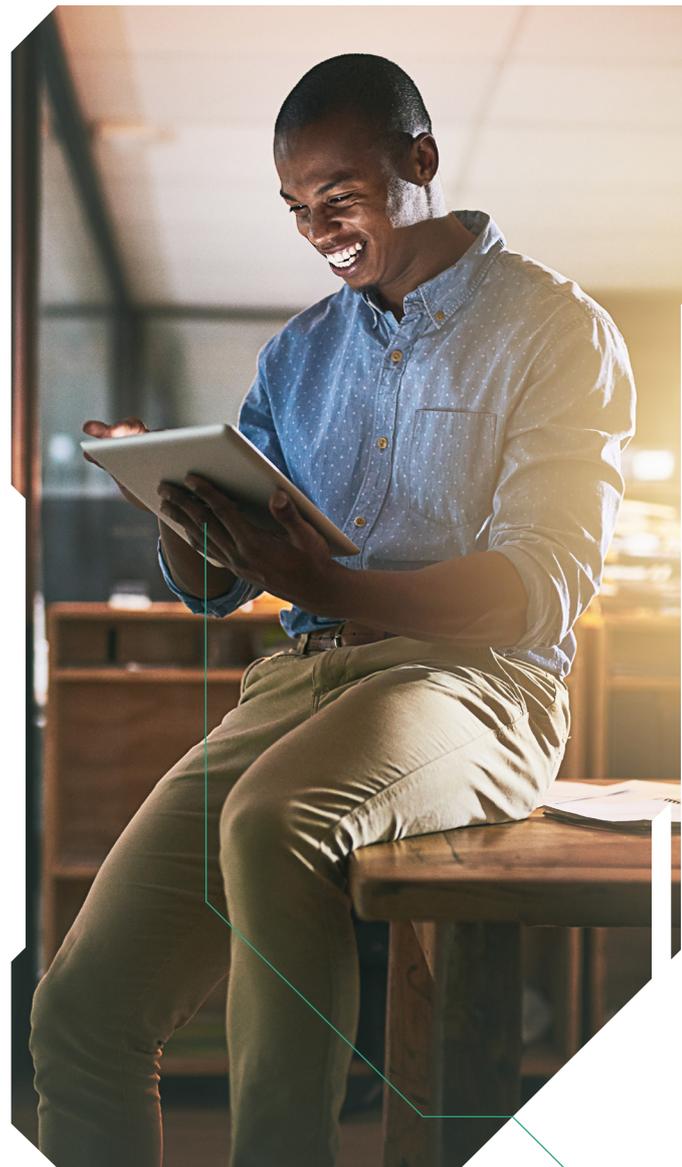
- Identify opportunities for improvement with advanced search and intuitive navigation
- Pinpoint tenant frustration points and fix issues – fast
- Analyse specific areas of feedback to drive higher levels of satisfaction
- Run targeted searches of your data to identify issues and trends

### Omnichannel routing

Using omnichannel routing, housing associations can stay one step ahead of changing customer expectations with complete voice and digital channel support, intelligent routing and proactive self-service options.

#### Features and benefits

- Connect customers efficiently with fast, responsive communications across all channels.
- Collaborate with the right agents and departments to resolve customer issues the first time.
- Personalise tenant experience across channels with agent-supported or self-service options.
- Reduce agent and administrative effort with intuitive, AI-powered solutions.



## Video collaboration and Remote Fix™

Solve upkeep issues and tenant enquiries with minimal wait times and maximum convenience. From routine maintenance to security emergencies, 8x8 Video Interaction enables housing associations to be there, even when they can't.

### Features and benefits

- Interact with tenants in real time
- Diagnose and solve problems remotely – saving time and streamlining processes
- Process claims faster by seeing damage first-hand, without the need to travel
- Walk tenants through documents or routine maintenance and build trust

## SMS APIs

With SMS APIs, housing associations can reach tenants anywhere, anytime by automating notifications, one-time passwords, reminders, and alerts.

### Features and benefits

- Schedule notifications and other important information in advance
- Keep tenants in the loop by using 8x8 Connect to send notifications, authentications, and one-time passwords instantly
- With no limits, thousands – or even millions – of messages can be sent at once – making it easier than ever to reach the whole community





## PCI/DSS for payments

With 8x8 Secure Pay, housing associations can simply and securely handle payment authorisations, giving tenants the reassurance that their money is safe.

### Features and benefits

- Speed up calls and improve security by directing tenants to a secure payment interface
- Provide tenants with peace of mind by allowing them to enter payment information directly
- Collect payments using DTMF/keypad tones to ensure maximum security
- Stay compliant with payment card collection regulations

## Workforce engagement management

Deliver great tenant experiences across all channels with a winning combination of adaptive quality management and workforce management solutions.

### Features and benefits

- Stay connected with your team and drive results
- Optimise customer experiences with actionable analytics on your team's performance
- Help agents grow and improve with insights delivered directly from tenants
- Minimise agent effort by predicting and managing staffing changes

# Guidance for housing associations

**With integrated contact centre, voice, video, chat, and API solutions, 8x8 uses one united platform to elevate the employee and customer experience from start to finish.**

**When it comes to implementing 8x8 contact centre solutions, Wavenet’s extensive experience puts us in prime position to advise and guide housing associations on the steps to take.**

## Assess

Conduct a thorough assessment of communication needs and infrastructure to lay the groundwork.

- Analyse current communication channels and systems to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.
- Assess tenant communication preferences and patterns to align the solution to their needs.
- Evaluate scalability requirements to ensure the contact centre solution can accommodate future growth and evolving demands.

## Customise

Customise contact centre configurations to align with specific organisational goals and workflows.

- Customise interactive voice response (IVR) menus and call routing strategies to optimise efficiency and enhance tenant experience.
- Personalise agent desktop interfaces and workflows to streamline processes and maximise productivity.

## Train

Provide a comprehensive training plan for staff on using contact centre tools and best practices throughout the course of the agreement.

- Implement training on contact centre tools, communication techniques and customer service best practices.
- Conduct interactive sessions with staff to ensure they’re capable of using the software and handling tenant enquiries effectively.
- Provide ongoing training and support resources to help staff continuously improve their skills and adapt to evolving technology and tenant needs.

## Evaluate

Evaluate performance metrics from tenants to identify areas for improvement and those that meet or exceed expectations, setting a benchmark for best practice.

- Establish KPIs to measure tenant satisfaction, response times and first-call resolution rates.
- Monitor and analyse performance data to identify trends, patterns and areas for improvement.
- Conduct satisfaction surveys and feedback sessions with tenants to gather insights and assess the solution’s effectiveness.



# The future of housing association communications

## AI-powered virtual assistants

By developing AI-powered virtual assistants, housing associations can revolutionise communication by automating routine enquiries and providing instant support to tenants. These virtual assistants can handle a wide range of queries, from rent payments to maintenance requests, freeing up human resources for more complex tasks and ensuring tenants receive timely assistance around the clock.

## Chatbot-enabled self-service

With intuitive chatbots and knowledge bases, tenants can find answers to their questions and fix problems themselves – leading to faster issue resolution. By expanding self-service options, housing associations will enhance tenant satisfaction and reduce reliance on traditional customer support channels, leading to greater operational efficiency and cost savings.

## IoT and smart sensors

Integrating IoT devices and smart sensors into properties will enable housing associations to proactively monitor and maintain buildings. These smart devices provide real-time

data on energy consumption, temperature levels and equipment performance, allowing housing associations to identify issues before they become expensive problems to fix. Ultimately, this will improve property management practices, reduce maintenance costs and enhance the overall living experience for tenants.

## Tech-driven data management

Advanced technology provides secure platforms for managing tenant information, ensuring data protection, integrity and compliance while enabling seamless transactions such as rent payments. By prioritising data security and transparency, housing associations will be able to build stronger relationships with tenants and improve trust.



# Who we work with

## Enterprises: Large corporations in sectors such as finance, technology, manufacturing and retail

Providing large organisations with end-to-end contact centre solutions to keep customers happy, agents engaged, and employees connected.



## Small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs)

Assisting businesses in implementing robust, secure and streamlined communications solutions.

## Healthcare providers: Hospitals, clinics and healthcare organisations

Enabling seamless communication between facilities and employees within the healthcare sector.



## Housing sector: Working in partnership with Housing Associations

Helping housing associations improve their contact centre communication to streamline processes and improve tenant experience.

## Educational Institutions: Schools, universities and educational institutions

Keeping schools connected and facilitating the delivery of critical information to parents and staff at scale.



## GET STARTED

# Work with a provider who can transform your organisation's communication capabilities.

Wavenet is a trusted managed services provider, working in partnership with public sector bodies and businesses nationwide.

We utilise our experience and expertise to learn each customer's needs and offer solutions that provide industry-leading telecommunications and technology capabilities, empowering you to create a platform that will truly optimise your operations.

Our partnerships are long-standing and hand-picked to only offer the best technology to our customers, giving you the peace of mind that a Wavenet solution will support and grow with you, no matter what the future holds.

Talk to us



[WAVENET.CO.UK/PUBLIC-SECTOR](https://www.wavenet.co.uk/public-sector)

**0333 234 0011**

Wavenet Limited  
One Central Boulevard  
Blythe Valley Park  
Solihull, West Midlands  
B90 8BG  
[contact@wavenet.co.uk](mailto:contact@wavenet.co.uk)

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public sector



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